



**National Recreation
and Park Association**



PRESS RELEASE

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**NATIONAL PARKS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION AWARDS GRANT TO EXPAND
FREE MEAL PROGRAM AT INDY PARKS**

Senator Lugar visits with day campers at Douglass Park

INDIANAPOLIS – (June 21, 2010) Indy Parks and Recreation, in partnership with the Indianapolis Parks Foundation, will strive to expand the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) thanks to a \$50,000 grant awarded by the National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA), through a gift from the Walmart Foundation to launch a national hunger relief initiative supporting summer and before/after school food programs.

“Park and recreation agencies across the U.S. are at the forefront of addressing hunger and nutrition problems within their communities,” said Barbara Tulipane, CEO of NRPA. “We provide a variety of recreational activities, open spaces for play, summer and before/after school food service programs, and nutritional programming – all of which can have a significant positive impact on a child. We are excited to bring nutritious meals to millions of children in need with the support of the Walmart Foundation.”

During the school year, 82% of Indianapolis Public School students qualify for free and reduced-price meals. When school is out, families with tight budgets have difficulty absorbing the additional meal costs. This summer Indy Parks will serve 160,000 meals funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and administered locally through the Indiana Department of Education at 82 sites including 30 parks, churches, Indianapolis Housing Authority complexes and community partners.

“This generous grant will give us the tools and resources we need to expand our program by 20 percent over the next two years,” said Leslie Power, School and Family Services Administrator. “Each child will participate in activities centered around healthy lifestyles that includes a health pledge, weekly nutritional messages and creative incentives to encourage more involvement.”



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U.S. Senator Richard Lugar visited with day camp children at Douglass Park Monday to support the Summer Food Service Program. Lugar authored the SFSP pilot program (“Lugar Pilots”) to simplify the reimbursement process for communities wanting to supply children with government funded lunches and then expanded the program nationwide.

“Summer nutrition and educational opportunities during summer months are paramount to breaking the cycle of under education and subsequent poverty,” said Lugar.

NRPA received \$2.1 million from the Walmart Foundation to support food service programs in up to 30 park and recreation agencies across the U.S. The NRPA grant is part of Walmart’s recently announced \$2 billion commitment to help end hunger in America through its “Fighting Hunger Together” initiative, with \$250 million pledged to support hunger relief organizations at the national, state and local levels.

Each year for a period of two years, NRPA will award grants to 15 park and recreation agencies for food service programs that will make it possible for the agencies to provide a combined 111,962 meals per day to qualified children during the summer months. Overall, these agencies will serve an estimated 4.9 million meals to children in 2010 and 2011.

About Philanthropy at Walmart

Walmart and the Walmart Foundation are proud to support the charitable causes that are important to customers and associates in their own neighborhoods. The Walmart Foundation funds initiatives focused on education, workforce development, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and health and wellness. From Feb. 1, 2009 through Jan. 31, 2010, Walmart and the Walmart Foundation gave more than \$512 million in cash and in-kind gifts globally, \$467 million of which was donated in the U.S. To learn more, visit www.walmartfoundation.org.

About the National Recreation and Park Association

The National Recreation and Park Association is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to advancing park, recreation and conservation efforts that enhance quality of life for all people. Through its network of roughly 21,000 recreation and park professionals and citizens, NRPA encourages the promotion of healthy lifestyles, recreation initiatives, and conservation of natural and cultural resources.

For more information, visit www.NRPA.org. For digital access to NRPA’s flagship publication, *Parks & Recreation*, visit www.parksandrec-magazine.org.

About the Indianapolis Parks Foundation

The mission of the Indianapolis Parks Foundation is to enhance the recreational, educational and cultural life of the Indianapolis community by encouraging and soliciting support for our city's parks system. IPF has provided more than \$19 million in private funding for programming, maintenance, capital needs and land acquisition. For more information, visit www.indyparksfoundation.org.

About Indy Parks & Recreation

The mission of Indy Parks & Recreation is to create fun, safe, engaging and sustainable parks that enhance the quality of life for individuals, neighborhoods and communities. Indy Parks will be a national model of excellence and destination for facilities and programs, protecting parks, greenways and open spaces and championing environmental initiatives. For more information, visit www.indyparks.org.

